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NRRC FOR DENNIS CURRY, KEVIN STICKNEY

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SUBJECT: UKRAINIAN RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATIONS LINK DEMARCHE

REF: 09 STATE 120541

¶1. (SBU) Embassy received a letter on 4 February from the Verification Directorate of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in response to reftel demarche, which was delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs December 7, ¶2009. The letter confirmed Government of Ukraine interest in maintaining the Government to Government Communications Link (GGCL) as proposed, and requested a preliminary meeting with Embassy to discuss suggestions for a team visit by the U.S. side.

¶2. (SBU) Per the Verification Directorate's request, Poloff and DTRO officer subsequently met with Colonel Kanonik and Colonel Shendyuk of the Verification Directorate on February ¶8. Kanonik said that Ukraine is definitely interested in exploring how the GGCL could be useful going forward, even with the expiration of its original mandate. For example, Ukraine would be interested in possible uses under the ABM Treaty.

¶3. (SBU) Kanonik said the GoU welcomes a working visit of a U.S. team of experts as soon as possible, and noted that the two sides should be prepared to discuss their expectations for the GGCL's potential uses, as well as the technical specifics that would be involved in upgrading and maintaining the Ukrainian link. In particular, he noted that the Ukrainian line is badly outdated, and that costs of operating an upgraded line have already been estimated at roughly USD 32,000 - 35,000 per year. This initial meeting would establish a basis for how and whether to move forward. He suggested another, final meeting in the autumn in Washington to reach formal agreement at a policy level.

TEFFT